

DIPLOMACY

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 23.—A feeling that the worst may still lie ahead in Berlin permeates the deadly serious conferences that go on in the capital these days.

It was disclosed tonight that the Kremlin had handed Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr. in Moscow a new note reportedly dealing with the question of access to West Berlin. The note has not been translated and forwarded, however, so its contents are unknown here. If it should contain more than the familiar Soviet propaganda on the subject,

however, Washington will be surprised. The experts do not expect anything new of substance.

While trying to deal with the inflammable situation caused by the closing of the East Berlin border, the United States is still marshaling its main effort for a response to any direct threat to its rights of access to West Berlin.

The unwelcome news this afternoon that East Germans were threatening in retaliation against a boycott of Communist-operated elevated lines, to cut rail communications between West Germany and West Berlin, is typical of the danger that could dwarf the border disorders.

Bluster—Or More?

Washington had no evidence that the threat to cut the lines was more than bluster, but it was bluster nevertheless against a backdrop of the tourniquet the tighter and tighter squeeze on Western rights.

The feeling that prevailed in Washington was that as a practical matter not a great deal could be done to stop the East Germans from closing the border. But something will have to be done—and will be—if the Communists interfere with access by the Allies. That was the meaning of the dispatch of 1,500 American troops up the autobahn over the week end.

The immediate aim of American diplomacy is to hold the West Germans, the British and the French in line for the severer tests that may come meanwhile, carrying forward the build-up of American conventional military forces.

President Kennedy's top board of strategy met this afternoon to try to chart a course for the days ahead. The group included Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, the President's military representative; Gen. Lyman Lemnitzer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Allen W. Dulles, director of Central Intelligence; McGeorge Bundy, special assistant to the President, and Edward R. Murrow, director of the United States Information Agency.

It was learned that the Allied answer to the Soviet note of Aug. 3 may be delayed for at least another week. One proposal that it may contain is an informal meeting of the Big Four Foreign Ministers at the U.N. General Assembly this fall to consider what points might be negotiated by a formal meeting of the ministers later in

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